

Appl. No. 10/643,447
Amdt. dated June 2, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 2, 2006

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A system for making walls comprising:
at least two pairs of connector plates each including retaining means for receiving
an end of a structural member;

at least two spacer plates, each defining at least one elongated slot extending
through said spacer plate;

a fastener extending through one of said connector plates in each of said at least
two pairs of connector plates, a portion of said fastener being slidably and rotatably
positioned in said elongated slot so that said spacer plate and said connector plate are
movable relative to one another, rotatably, and along said slot to allow the distance
between and the relative orientation of successive connector plates to be desirably
configured;

successively positioned connector plates being rotatably coupled to one another
by at least one of said spacer plates; and wherein

to form a wall, a pair of connector plates is coupled via said retaining means, one
to each of a pair of generally opposing ends defined by each structural member, said
connector plates being rotatably movable relative to said spacer plates thereby allowing
said structural members to be oriented relative to one another so as to form a surface
having desired contours when a wall-forming material is fastened to, and extends
between said structural members.

2. (Original) A system as defined by claim 1 wherein said at least two pairs of
connector plates includes a plurality of connector plates and said at least two spacer
plates includes a plurality of spacer plates.

3. (Original) A system as defined by claim 1 wherein each of said spacer plates
defines adjustment means for selectively increasing or decreasing the distance between
successive stud connector plates.

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4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) A system defined by claim 2 wherein:

at least two spacer plates are interposed between successive connector plates;
each spacer plate being rotatably coupled to one of said connector plates and
slidably coupled to one another so that the distance between successive connector plates,
as well as the orientation of successive connector plates relative to one another can be
changed.

6. (Original) A system as defined by claim 5 wherein

each of said spacer plates defines an elongated slot; and

a fastener slidably extends through said slots defined by adjacent spacer plates
thereby allowing the spacer plates to move relative to one another along said slots.

7. (Original) A system as defined by claim 1 further comprising a pair of

structural straps that each extend between, and engage an outer surface defined by each
of said connector plates, one of said structural straps being positioned adjacent to, and
extending approximately perpendicular to, one distal end defined by said structural
members, and the other of said structural straps being positioned adjacent to, and
extending approximately perpendicular to, a generally opposing distal end defined by
said structural members.

8. (Original) A system as defined by claim 1 wherein said retaining means

includes a pocket defined in-part by substantially upstanding side walls, said pocket
being configured to receive and retain a complementarily shaped structural member.

9. (Original) A system as defined by claim 8 wherein at least a portion of said

sidewalls define apertures extending there through each for receiving a fastener that
extends through said aperture and into said structure member thereby attaching said
structural member to said connector plate.

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10. (Original) A system defined by claim 7 wherein said structural straps each define at least one aperture extending there through to allow said structural strap to, via a fastener, be coupled to an adjacent wall.

11-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Original) A system as defined by claim 7 further comprising a second pair of structural straps, said structural straps being positioned at and coupled to said distal ends of said structural members on opposing sides thereof.

15. (Original) A system as defined by claim 1 wherein each of said spacer plates defines means for creating an aperture therein for allowing conduit or wiring to extend there through.

16. (Original) A system defined by claim 15 wherein said means for creating an aperture includes a knock-out portion retained on said spacer plate by at least one frangible portion.

17. (Original) A system as defined by claim 1 wherein at least one of said connector plates is an end plate.

18. (Cancelled)